

House Bill 796

By: Representatives Jackson of the 161st, Sims of the 169th, and Watson of the 91st

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

To amend Article 3 of Chapter 2 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to special license plates for certain persons and vehicles, so as to allow issuance of two free license plates or revalidation decals to disabled veterans; to provide for related matters; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Article 3 of Chapter 2 of Title 40 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to special license plates for certain persons and vehicles, is amended by striking Code Section 40-2-69, relating to free license plates and revalidation decals for certain disabled veterans, and inserting in its place the following:

"40-2-69.

(a) Any veteran who was discharged under honorable conditions and who served on active duty in the armed forces of the United States or on active duty in a reserve component of the United States, including the National Guard, shall, upon application therefor, be issued a two free motor vehicle license plate upon presentation of proof that such veteran is receiving or that he or she is entitled to receive a statutory award from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for:

(1) Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both feet;

(2) Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both hands;

(3) Loss of sight in one or both eyes; or

(4) Permanent impairment of vision of both eyes of the following status: central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye, with corrective glasses, or central visual acuity of more than 20/200 if there is a field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees in the better eye.

(b) Any veteran who was discharged under honorable conditions and who has been adjudicated by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as being 100 percent totally disabled and entitled to receive service connected benefits shall, upon application therefor, be issued a two free motor vehicle license plate upon presentation of proof that he or she is receiving or that he or she is entitled to receive benefits for a 100 percent service connected disability, as long as he or she is 100 percent disabled. A veteran who claims that such 100 percent total disability is permanent shall furnish proof of such permanent disability through a letter from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

(c)(1) Once a veteran has established his or her eligibility to receive two free motor vehicle license plates as a result of being permanently disabled, he or she shall be entitled to receive two free plates or two free revalidation decals in succeeding years on any automobile, private passenger pickup truck, motorcycle, station wagon, or van type vehicle of three-quarter tons or less that he or she may own or jointly with his or her spouse own or acquire in the future.

(2) Once a veteran has established his or her eligibility to receive two free motor vehicle license plates as a result of having a 100 percent total disability which has not been determined to be a permanent disability, he or she shall be entitled to receive two free plates or two free revalidation decals in succeeding years upon furnishing, on an annual basis, proof of such 100 percent disability through a letter from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. Such free plates or free revalidation decals shall apply to any automobile, private passenger pickup truck, motorcycle, station wagon, or van type vehicle of three-quarter tons or less that he or she may own or jointly with his or her spouse own or acquire in the future.

(3)(A) Two free license plates or revalidation decals each year shall be furnished for vehicles other than motorcycles to veterans qualifying under this Code section unless the originals are lost. Such plates shall be fastened to ~~both the front and the rear of the vehicle~~ vehicles.

(B) One license plate or revalidation decal each year shall be furnished for motorcycles to veterans qualifying under this Code section unless the original is lost. Such plate shall be fastened to the rear of the vehicle."

SECTION 2.

Said article is further amended by striking Code Section 40-2-70, relating to special license plates for disabled veterans not qualifying under Code Section 40-2-69, and inserting in its place the following:

1 "40-2-70.

2 Any citizen and resident of the State of Georgia who has been discharged from the armed
3 forces under conditions other than dishonorable, who is disabled to any degree specified
4 and enumerated in Code Section 40-2-69, and who is the owner of a private passenger
5 motor vehicle, but who cannot qualify under Code Section 40-2-69, shall be entitled to a
6 special and distinctive automobile license plate. Such license plate shall be transferred to
7 another vehicle acquired by such veteran or jointly by such veteran and his or her spouse
8 as provided in Code Section 40-2-80. Such veteran shall be entitled to such plate
9 regardless of whether he or she is suffering from a service connected or nonservice
10 connected disability. Such veteran must apply for such license plate and, upon compliance
11 with the state motor vehicle laws for licensing of motor vehicles and payment of the regular
12 license fee for plates as prescribed under Article 7 of this chapter, such veteran shall be
13 issued similar license plates as prescribed in Code Section 40-2-71 for private passenger
14 cars. There shall be no charge for the additional plate or plates issued such veteran under
15 this Code section. If a veteran has not been certified as disabled by the United States
16 Department of Veterans Affairs, such veteran may submit to the Department of Veterans
17 Service such veteran's discharge papers and a certified statement from a physician, licensed
18 under Chapter 34 of Title 43, certifying that in the opinion of such physician such veteran
19 is disabled to a degree enumerated in Code Section 40-2-69. If the certificate from the
20 physician indicates the qualifying disabilities which meet the standards of the United States
21 Department of Veterans Affairs, the commissioner of veterans service shall submit a letter
22 to the commissioner of motor vehicle safety indicating that the veteran meets the
23 requirements of this Code section and qualifies for a special license plate as provided in
24 this Code section."

25 SECTION 3.

26 Said article is further amended by striking Code Section 40-2-71, relating to the design of
27 special license plates for disabled veterans, and inserting in its place the following:

28 "40-2-71.

29 (a) The commissioner is directed to furnish the license plates provided for in Code
30 Sections 40-2-69 and 40-2-70. Such plates shall be printed in three colors: red, white, and
31 blue. The commissioner is authorized and directed to design the license plate. Each plate
32 shall contain, in bold characters, the name of the state, or abbreviation thereof, the year, the
33 serial number, and either the words 'Disabled Veteran' or 'Disabled Vet.'

34 (b) Such license plates so issued shall be transferred to another vehicle as provided in
35 Code Section 40-2-80.

1 (c) No disabled veteran shall be entitled to own or operate more than ~~one vehicle~~ two
2 vehicles with the free license plates provided by Code Sections 40-2-69, 40-2-70, and this
3 Code section."

4 **SECTION 4.**

5 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
6 without such approval.

7 **SECTION 5.**

8 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.